



Association of Bay Area Governments  
Bay Area Air Quality Management District  
Metropolitan Transportation Commission

# Joint Policy Committee

## PLANNING RESOURCES

Brownfield Development

Tool or Topic: **Brownfield Development**

Author

Organization

Published

Format

Title: Brownfield Redevelopers' Perceptions of Environmental Insurance: An Appraisal and Review of Public Policy Options

Meyer

Lincoln Institute of Land Policy

12/1/2002

PDF file

[#http://www.lincolninst.edu/pubs/pub-detail.asp?id=664#](http://www.lincolninst.edu/pubs/pub-detail.asp?id=664#)

Description:

All real estate investments involve some risk associated with time and costs for construction as well as property market conditions. Brownfield properties, with past contamination concerns, pose greater uncertainties, associated with site conditions and market responses, and thus are far riskier than development on land without environmental quality concerns. Environmental insurance (EI), that permits risks to be capped or transferred to others, can contribute to a more effective and efficient market for brownfield sites, and thus to restraining the spatial segregation, underutilization of urban centers, and spatial expansion that has accompanied abandonment of suspect sites.

In this paper, we report on the results from a survey and interviews of brownfield developers on the role that EI plays in facilitating brownfield redevelopment. Our objectives were to add to the sparse body of empirical data on brownfield sites—providing information on both general characteristics of brownfield properties as well specific features of EI use—and to draw on this information to inform public policy and approaches to insurance use at brownfields.

We found that developers' EI utilization rates are relatively low, reflecting in part poor knowledge of the availability of the tool, but also potentially due to the exceptional cost of the risk transfers for smaller development projects. To the extent that EI is used, the most important coverages appear to be protections for losses due to business interruption due to onsite pollution, cleanup of previously unknown onsite pollution, legal defense costs, and reopeners due to future regulatory actions. Insurance appears particularly relevant at sites where high risk financing capital is used, off-site contaminant migration is likely, or institutional controls on future land uses are prevalent. It also appears more important to a developer for projects that provide new and exceptional investment opportunities, for those that threaten major impacts on the firm's reputation and financial health in the event of a substantial uninsured loss, or when the firm lacks adequate risk spreading across its investment project portfolio.

Local governments and nonprofit organizations can promote EI utilization through information dissemination, active intervention to promote risk pooling in local markets, and financial subsidies to developers for EI use. Community-based organizations similarly could use the EI tools for their larger projects and/or may be able to promote risk pooling in their neighborhoods.

Tool or Topic: **Brownfield Development**

Title: Brownfields in the St. Louis Region

Author

Connolly

Organization

East-West Gateway Council of  
Governments

Published

12/1/2003

Format

PDF file

<http://www.ewgateway.org/pdffiles/BluePrintDocs/BrownfieldsinStLRegion.pdf>

Description:

The purpose of this paper is to inform municipal officials and others who have a stake in creating a sustainable future for the St. Louis region. The paper focuses on the opportunities that brownfields present for revitalization through business, housing, and greenspace development.

Brownfields revitalization can result in a stronger economy, healthier residents, and a better quality of life in the community and throughout region.

The abundance of reusable, vacant property is perhaps the St. Louis region's most underutilized asset.

Tool or Topic: **Brownfield Development**

Author

Organization

Published

Format

Title: Horizons 2025 Implementation Municipal Tools and Techniques

Cilurso

Delaware Valley Regional Planning  
Commission

4/1/2002

PDF file

<http://www.dvrpc.org/planning/community/MCDtools/pdf/ToolsAndTechniques.pdf#>

Description:

This brochure describes the variety of tools and techniques available to local governments to implement the region's long-range plan, Horizons 2025, prepared and adopted by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC). The plan provides an integrated land use and transportation vision for the region's growth and development through the year 2025. Key policies of Horizons 2025 include:

- Revitalization of the region's core cities of Philadelphia, Camden, Trenton and Chester through maintenance and restoration of existing infrastructure systems, services, and capacity to support and attract new growth
- Stabilization of older townships, boroughs, and cities located throughout the region by maintaining or improving current infrastructure to support or enhance the social, economic, and physical character of these communities
- Growth Management of developing suburban communities by discouraging extensive growth and related infrastructure services and facilities outside designated growth areas and encouraging center-based planning and alternatives to conventional suburban design
- Preservation of farming and rural communities of the region by limiting the extension or development of major infrastructure systems in rural areas
- Conservation of sensitive natural areas and an open space network

Municipal governments have the primary authority and responsibility to implement these policies. This brochure is designed to introduce local officials and citizens to planning tools that may be useful in their communities.

The tools listed in this brochure are organized into several categories: Land Use, Economic Development, Natural Resource Preservation, Historic Preservation, Transportation, and Multi-Municipal Cooperation.

Tool descriptions include an overview of the use of the tool and an example of some of its benefits. Where appropriate, after the tool description, common local planning documents that will need to be amended or adopted are listed in italics.

Tool or Topic: **Brownfield Development**

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Organization

Published

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Title: Introduction to Environmental Insurance

Meyer

Lincoln Institute of Land Policy

5/1/2002

PDF file

[#http://www.lincolninst.edu/pubs/pub-detail.asp?id=623#](http://www.lincolninst.edu/pubs/pub-detail.asp?id=623#)

Description:

Paper presented at a course titled: "Reusing Brownfields and Other Underutilized Land: A Seminar for Senior Staff of Community-Based and Non-Profit Development Agencies."

Tool or Topic: **Brownfield Development**

Author

Organization

Published

Format

Title: Locating Opportunities for Brownfield Redevelopment in St. Louis

Walker

East Bay Community Foundation

7/1/2004

PDF file

<http://www.ewgateway.org/pdffiles/library/blueprint/brownfieldredevinurbanstlouis.pdf#>

Description:

The emergence of brownfields is a change in the context of policy discourse surrounding environmental protection and communities and reflects a shift toward private market based solutions as a response to past environmental practices. The efficiencies of this cleanup approach and its effect on some of St. Louis City's most blighted communities are discussed here. This analysis makes the assumption that geographic areas with greater concentrations of blight may not receive the attention of privately sponsored cleanup efforts yet should be the focus of attention for publicly initiated brownfield redevelopment efforts and joint ventures. These considerations first lead to a descriptive question. Where is blight most prevalent? With such areas identified a second question follows immediately: What determines brownfield redevelopment? The empirical focus is the City of St. Louis.

Tool or Topic: **Brownfield Development**

Author

Organization

Published

Format

Title: Promoting More Equitable Brownfield Redevelopment: Promising Approaches for Land Banks and Other Community Land Development Entities

Leigh

Lincoln Institute of Land Policy

3/1/200

PDF file

[#http://www.lincolninst.edu/pubs/pub-detail.asp?id=84#](http://www.lincolninst.edu/pubs/pub-detail.asp?id=84#)

Description:

This project has focused on identifying promising approaches for improving the redevelopment prospects of the least marketable brownfield sites typically found in depressed urban neighborhoods. The current practice of many brownfield redevelopment projects is to select only the most marketable sites for remediation and redevelopment, essentially perpetuating the age-old “creaming” process. Private and public developers’ practices of avoiding the lowest market value parcels typically exclude disadvantaged neighborhoods from programs aimed at redeveloping brownfields. Doing so creates the potential for widening existing inequalities between better-off and worse-off neighborhoods.

This project specifically sought to identify land transfer procedures and processes through which land bank authorities and other community land development entities are willing to receive vacant brownfield property that is tax-delinquent and environmentally contaminated, and, able to arrange for remediation and sale of such property. The primary focus has been on an additional barrier typically associated with tax-delinquent properties: their low market values. For these properties, the taxes due are only one, and actually a more easily resolved, barrier to achieving property re-use. Thus, while the land bank authority could be helpful in forgiving the property taxes owed on the parcel as an incentive for re-use, the property’s redevelopment potential is still thwarted by its having little-to-no market desirability. It is this more difficult question of how to address sites in areas where demand for property is low, and contamination further complicates redevelopment, that we focus upon here in order to promote more equitable brownfield redevelopment.

Tool or Topic: **Brownfield Development**

Author

Organization

Published

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Title: Recycling the City: The Use and Reuse of Urban Land

Greenstein

Lincoln Institute of Land Policy

11/1/2004 Book

[#http://www.lincolninst.edu/pubs/pub-detail.asp?id=984#](http://www.lincolninst.edu/pubs/pub-detail.asp?id=984#)

Description:

within political, economic, institutional and policy contexts. In the volume's three sections, the authors consider the issues at the national, regional, local and site levels; examine redevelopment processes and policies; and describe some potential uses of vacant and abandoned land, including urban agriculture, green development, and the preservation of an industrial landscape for cultural uses.

Following an introduction by coeditors Rosalind Greenstein and Yesim Sungu-Eryilmaz, the 11 chapters raise the essential questions: Is vacant land an opportunity or an obstacle? Are brownfields a legacy of prior industrial wealth, or of illegal and dangerous contamination? Is a land inventory vital to community needs for future growth, or the symbol of political shortsightedness or worse? Is the reclamation of this land the first step in an urban turnaround, or one more giveaway of local assets to investors with weak ties to the community?

To transform urban vacant lots requires focusing redevelopment efforts beyond the vacancy to the neighborhood and district context; accepting transitional uses as intermediate states; and a commitment to making thousands of small steps. The authors put redevelopment of urban land within the context of land economics, and make policy recommendations that concentrate on local action, including by nongovernmental organizations.

Recycling the City gathers cross-disciplinary research and analysis on the topic of underutilized, abandoned and vacant urban land, and will be of interest to anyone concerned with the future of our cities.



Tool or Topic: **Brownfield Development**

Author

Organization

Published

Format

Title: Redeveloping Brownfields with Federal Transportation Funds

Schroeer

Association of Metropolitan  
Planning Organizatons

11/15/200 PDF file

[#http://www.ampo.org/publications/Brownfields.pdf#](http://www.ampo.org/publications/Brownfields.pdf#)

Description:

Provides information on using federal transportation funds to clean up environmental contamination in association with transportation and joint development projects. Includes case studies and suggests other sources of funds.

Tool or Topic: **Brownfield Development**

Author

Organization

Published

Format

Title: Risks and Rewards of Brownfield Redevelopment

Wright

Lincoln Institute of Land Policy

4/1/1997

Book

[#http://www.lincolninst.edu/pubs/pub-detail.asp?id=33#](http://www.lincolninst.edu/pubs/pub-detail.asp?id=33#)

Description:

Brownfields are abandoned or under-used industrial and commercial facilities where expansion or redevelopment is complicated by real or perceived environmental contamination that may present direct public health hazards. In most cases the more serious threat is to the economic health of the host city due to lost jobs, abandoned industrial sites and the expansion of blighted neighborhoods. Ultimately, the private real estate market will determine how brownfields are reused, but government should act to protect the public interest.

Tool or Topic: **Brownfield Development**

Author

Organization

Published

Format

Title: Smart Infill: Creating More Livable Communities in the Bay Area

Steinbach

Greenbelt Alliance

3/1/2002

PDF file

[#http://www.greenbelt.org/downloads/resources/report\\_smartinfill.pdf#](http://www.greenbelt.org/downloads/resources/report_smartinfill.pdf#)

Description:

This 72-page guidebook for civic leaders and local citizens shows how the region can achieve more livable communities and more sustainable development by developing underutilized land within existing urban areas. The report presents 12 key strategies to bring about well-planned infill housing and mixed-use development. These recommendations include zoning changes, design guidelines, public participation processes, revised parking requirements, and preparation of "Specific Plans" coordinating neighborhood revitalization.

In addition to providing a useful toolbox of strategies for smart infill, the guidebook features photos and case studies of successful infill throughout the Bay Area. In these examples, municipal action is already helping revitalize neighborhoods or entire cities and providing much-needed housing for people at different income levels.

Tool or Topic: **Brownfield Development**

Author

Organization

Published

Format

Title: The Legacy of Contamination and the Redevelopment of Inner-City Industrial Districts

Howland

Lincoln Institute of Land Policy

5/1/2002

PDF file

[#http://www.lincolninst.edu/pubs/pub-detail.asp?id=121#](http://www.lincolninst.edu/pubs/pub-detail.asp?id=121#)

Description:

This study examines the role that land contamination plays in hindering central city industrial redevelopment. We tracked all sales, the selling price, existence of contamination and length of time on the market in one industrial area of more than 5,500 acres in Southwest Baltimore. The results indicate that after the mid 1990s, contaminated parcels are selling and the market has adjusted to contamination by lowering sales prices. In fact, contamination does not appear to be a barrier at all, when the intended land use is also industrial. To seriously implement Smart Growth and central city revitalization, advocates will have to tackle the often ignored problem of older industrial areas, such as outdated parcel sizes, inadequate roads for modern truck access, outdated and aging infrastructure, incompatible land uses and unrealistic assumptions about the lands possibilities. The sole focus on contamination obscures other equally important barriers to the redevelopment of industrial central city districts.

Tool or Topic: **Brownfield Development**

Author

Organization

Published

Format

Title: Three Case Studies on The Roles of Community-Based Organizations in Brownfields and Other Vacant Property Redevelopment

Brachman

Lincoln Institute of Land Policy

10/1/2003 PDF file

[#http://www.lincolnst.edu/pubs/pub-detail.asp?id=858#](http://www.lincolnst.edu/pubs/pub-detail.asp?id=858#)

Description:

These case studies, representative of some of the different roles that community-based organizations (CBOs) can play in brownfield property redevelopment, were written based on interviews by the author with senior staff and/or directors of the CBOs involved in the projects. Despite variations from case to case in CBO role, organizational structure and external conditions, common successful redevelopment strategies emerge, including partnering with city officials on property acquisition and use of city services; linking redevelopment with other visible physical improvements; communicating regularly with city officials and community groups; undertaking redevelopment primarily as part of a comprehensive plan, instead of on a site-by-site basis; and utilizing tax increment financing. Obtaining property ownership or site control, a major barrier, can be overcome with city involvement or even temporary municipal ownership. CBO involvement with another major barrier -- extensive pre-development work (e.g. preparing the site, navigating confusing site control issues, assessing environmental conditions) -- greatly improves the chances for redevelopment success. Finally, while site contamination is seldom a primary barrier to property redevelopment, market conditions and location remain more frequent and intractable barriers.

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